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The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

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SHERWOOD ANDERSON TO THEODORE DREISER

Dear Dreiser:

You asked me, in a letter of a few weeks ago, whether or not, in my wanderings in the American hinterlands this year, among country people, small town people, city people, etc., I had found any signs of a coming revolution. Well, I haven't. I have been standing in bread-lines, sitting on railroad embankments, going everywhere, and I have found nothing of the sort.

Which leads me to write this letter. Do you know, I think that the European revolutionists have got the Americans all wrong, and in getting us all wrong both the Socialists and the Communists are at fault. The whole background of the American is different from that of the European.

The great age here, in America, was, as we all know, the building age. There was a time here when the Americans were pushing out from the eastern seaboard, getting over the mountains, out onto the great plains, building railroads as they went, building towns and cities, settling the farms, making the country. The country was so vast that it had to be saw swiftly. But for the coming of the machine, the railroads, etc., I do not think there is any doubt but that the country would have been split up into perhaps a dozen small nations. The machine, that we are all so ready to curse now, saved us from that, from perhaps hundreds of years of internal wars, state against state.

Now you see that in talking of revolution here there is too much talk of the decay of a civilization, break down of capitalism, and so on. Who really knows about capitalism in the abstract? The talk isn't understood. It may be that our newspapers are at fault. I don't know, but at any rate, to the average American, revolution means what?

It means citizens with their backs to the wall, about to be shot, and when we think in those terms every man jack of us shivers.

If we individual Americans are not capitalists, we have practically all dreamed of being capitalists.

Only the other day I went down a railroad embankment in a western industrial city and sat with three down-and-outs . . . all young men. We spoke of Russia. I brought the subject up—wanting to see what they would say—and the reaction was as it always is—suspicion of me.

"Say, I understand that over there they put any guy they want to against the wall and shoot hell outa him."

"Say, they shoot you for just having religion over there."

So there is revolution fixed in the American mind that way.

But there is something else. Everywhere I have gone, men are crying for work. "Give us work. Give us work." That cry, from all over America, rises clear and strong above any cry for bread, even in a time like this.

And so, what is wanted here, Dreiser, is new leadership, new ideas.

Some man must come who will cry and keep crying, "Here is the work!"

"And here! And here!"

It has gone on so long—so long. For all the destitution there may be in America now—actual hunger and homelessness—it isn't of real importance when compared to the hopelessness. That you get everywhere and it is sickening. Youth has it even worse than we older ones.

As though there were nothing to be done. What I am talking about is a shifting of emphasis. Let the American Communists or Socialists, for example, shift the entire emphasis over to building—working. Too much, in America, going to work means only making more underwear, more radios, more automobiles.

Let the new leader or leaders point out and keep pointing out that practically every city in America needs rebuilding. Doesn't everything useful built create new wealth?

Even yet two-thirds of the Americans are living in hovels not fit for dogs. Farm lands are being let go to hell and the coal mines are being worked with criminal wastefulness. It is so everywhere. All of this talk of leisure. Who wants it? The way to make a revolution in America is to cry, "Work! Work! Work here, for all hands for a thousand years!" With all my heart I believe that if the Americans once got that idea into their heads they would make the revolution, quite incidentally. It would be the mere brushing aside of anyone who stood between men and the work. What is needed now is an end to all the talk of our failure as a people and new talk of what is to be done.

There are the puzzled workmen in the bread-lines now and there is youth, as alive and full of energy as youth ever was, standing still now, puzzled also. Every town and every city in America is full of young men who are crying, "Give us work! Give us work! It is this damned standing still here, doing nothing, that is taking the heart out of us."

Suppose such men, young and old, do not understand economics. They can see with their own eyes how our railroads are being let fall into decay, how houses in towns and cities are being let go shabby, how the streets grow more and more dirty, how, on the farms, no new farming tools can be bought. Everywhere the same note. Why wouldn't it take the heart out of any people?

As for this thing called "finance" . . . yesterday I stood with a young man—out of work and shabby—on a bridge over some railroad yards. "Is it money?" he asked. "Say, if you make the world richer, building more and more things men need for their comfort, why isn't that wealth? Why couldn't you base money on the wealth of the whole country, not on a particular yellow metal hidden in some bank vault? If I am standing here, wanting to work, and they won't let me, why isn't that a destruction of wealth?"

Yours,
Sherwood Anderson

THE WORST BOOK OF THE MONTH

ALL I SURVEY.
By G. K. Chesterton.
5½ x 8. pp. 280. $2.50
New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

THE IGNORAMUS AS NOVEL READER

By STELLA BENSON

IT seems to me that if one traveled only in print, making one's way from novel to novel, instead of from shore to shore, the thing called *Wanderlust* would be practically unknown. From time to time I go abroad in person, and find the inhabitants of Abroad living busy, natural and various lives like the rest of us. But this must be an illusion, for if one is to believe the novelists of the region called Abroad, the men and women who live there do nothing at all but Yearn. One never seems actually to catch these foreigners in the act of Yearning, but it seems they do it all the time. They do it in different ways, of course, in different countries, but a certain dullness and frowstiness is unfortunately common to all forms of Yearning—except one's own personal form, which is always Noble and Beautiful.

Look at the Scandinavians—what dull and frowsty lives they represent themselves as leading! They are always yearning to Do Right; Scandinavian lovers move about in Comradeship Groups, yearning like anything, wearing high-necked blouses, skis, etc. Look at the French! In French novels of the provinces, we learn that heroines, if unmarried, yearn without ceasing to kill themselves—or, if married, yearn without ceasing to kill their husbands, lovers, babies or all three. The urban French citizen seems just as unlucky; lovers, in no less than four sexes, who throng the stuffy-sounding homes of Paris, are, we are told, just as disappointing to the yearner as simple marriage or virginity in the provinces. The Germans, again, we gather, are always yearning for death, and usually pull it off, with the help of consumption or a broken heart. Look at the Spanish—or rather, don't look at them very hard, for I cannot say that I have followed Spanish novelists at all; I only know that my heart turns black when I see the names Fernando, Maria, Gonzalez, Pepito, etc., in print; they suggest to me stuffy yearnings in blank verse, interrupted by stuffy and unnecessary misunderstandings which a word of simple prose would have cleared up. But this impression is not, of course, the fault of Spanish authors; people like William Shakespeare are responsible for it. Again, the Russians—before the revolution—shared with the Scandinavians the habit of yearning heavily to Do Right, but now they yearn, equally heavily, to Do Wrong.

As an Englishwoman, I read, I suppose, more English novels than novels of other lands, and therefore English life seems to me neither so Real nor so Earnest as life abroad; love—or lovelessness—does not seem to have such an invariably lethal effect in Great Britain. But since, apparently, only novels of the yearning type manage to cross international borders, I can well imagine that, to readers abroad, the English must seem to yearn tirelessly, and to advertise their dullness and frowstiness as

(*Continued on Page* 4, *Col.* 1)

VULGARITY

By LEONARD ROWE

IN the United States, where vulgarity assumes more ingenious and manifold guises than anywhere else on earth and where outwardly magnificent forms almost completely conceal an underlying and intrinsic shabbiness, it might not be amiss to look somewhat closely at this chief of our national traits and try to disengage its essence from its lush and gaudy trappings. The dictionaries do not help us out—their definitions of vulgarity are themselves vulgar and display all the sniffish fastidiousness of a Boston spinster sipping tea in her Back Bay parlor. To quote from Funk and Wagnall's "New Standard Dictionary of The English Language":

> *vulgar* *1.* of or pertaining to the common people, or to the common herd or crowd; consisting of, suited to, or practised by, the uneducated masses; hence . . . displaying or indicating a low, coarse, or common nature; plebeian; somewhat coarse; boorish; low. . . . *3.* Lacking in elegance or in culture or refinement; offensive to good taste and refined sentiment; opposed to reputable literary usage; inelegant; unrefined.

In parvenu snobbishness and virtuous refinement the dictionary's and a Sunday School teacher's conception of vulgarity are on a par. Both completely lack a sense of reality and of humanity and are dictated by the sterile notions of a humorless, stodgy and priggish bourgeoisie desperately straining for propriety and correctness. That few really first-rate writers have ever conformed to such a standard either in their conduct or in their writings is proof of its arbitrariness and falsity. By it, almost every great work of literature would be outlawed and the laurels of the Muse would go to the members of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

To arrive at a more satisfactory definition I propose to call to mind a few random names, of whose vulgarity there can be little question. Perhaps, by discovering in them some inherent common trait, a more accurate definition of the term may be arrived at. At once, such names as these occur: the *Social Register*, Yale's new super-ultra-Gothic Gymnasium, Rockefeller Centre, Exclusive Clubs, Madison Avenue "period" furniture, Norman châteaux for stock brokers, Spanish villas for tabloid publishers, Waldorf-Astoria dining rooms, Michael Arlen, Restricted Neighborhoods, Mother's Day, William Lyon Phelps, Rotary, Movie Cathedrals, the magazine *Fortune*, Hollywood, the Daughters of the American Revolution, Listerine advertisements, eighty per cent of all other advertisements, the "society" columns of American newspapers, etc., etc.

It is palpably obvious that almost none of these examples conforms to the dictionary definition of vulgarity. None could be called "low" or "coarse" or "boorish." Indeed, they are here and there quite the reverse, some fairly dripping with "refined sentiment," "elegance," and "good taste." Why, then, dub them vulgar?

They are vulgar because, in varying degrees, they are all hollow imitations, lacking in integrity and genuineness: making blatant pretensions to an importance or a grandeur or a beauty that they are devoid of, and hiding their inner cheapness with meretricious gilt and tinsel. Ashamed of their real selves and straining to appear other than they are, they reveal all the ugly traits that inevitably accompany sham and pretentiousness: snobbery, tasteless ostentation, pride in mere size, fawning sycophancy, timorous conformity to the passions and prejudices of the moment, and a pathological obsession for supposedly genteel ways and usages.

Concretely applied, the new definition (admittedly, a rather nebulous one) covers most of the cases better than does the old one. For instance, Michael Arlen is vulgar because his acceptance of the ideals and standards of the fashionable morons he depicts is as unquestioning and as fawning as that of the most gushing and swooning "society" editor. Essentially, the bulk of his novels are servant-girl romances with costumes by Chanel and decorations by Oliver Messel. The magazine, *Fortune*, is vulgar for romantically attempting to disguise the rapacity and swinishness of American "Big Business" with arty typography, tony illustrations in color, and Napoleonic chronicles glorifying soap, pickle, and movie magnates. The Rotarian's vulgarity arises from his pathetic effort to masquerade his sordid and stupid affairs with the trappings of a Crusader and the mawkish mask of "Service." William Lyon Phelps is vulgar because, although having occupied an important chair of literature at Yale, he displays the critical taste of a Y. M. C. A. director and lavishes ecstatic pæans upon the most unconscionable drivel.

In America, vulgarity's yearning for gentility causes an almost psychopathic horror of anything

(*Continued on Page* 2, *Col.* 5)

SERVANTS OF GOD
No. 8

From the New York Times:

The Rev. Edward H. Emett, dismissed pastor of the Manhattan Congregational Church, Broadway and Seventy-sixth Street, was accused yesterday, in a suit filed by the church in Supreme Court, of having misappropriated church funds between April 1, 1928, and last Feb. 14. The complaint demands that the minister account for the money and property and return it to the church.

WHEN GOD CAME TO HOLLYWOOD

By RICHARD SHERIDAN AMES

HOLLYWOOD does not react quite normally to any natural manifestation. So, following curtailments imposed by the late esteemed Bank Holiday and the vast significance of further salary cuts, Nature's now celebrated subterranean caprice was ultimately regarded as a gross display of temperament. The ladies and gentlemen of the cinema, their cohorts and articulate auxiliaries, became petulant. They pouted that Nature had stolen their show.

Libido-town had been certain for some time that it could and must take it on the chin. But it was not prepared to be pelted with plaster and shoved off the front page. No one had ever thought to question the sportsmanship of the California climate. Institutions might crumble but the benign sun would never know even partial eclipse, the mangy palms would ever wave obediently for the cameras, and fair skies would beckon the curious to bring their box lunches and autograph albums to the latest première.

They laughed, therefore, at the pulpit prophets of doom when they announced that a surfeited God might one day shake the earth, destroy Hollywood dam and purge New Sodom with thundering tons of pure High Sierra water. The climate was a fact, untouched by press agents or sophistry. Consequently it was safe, if not logical, to perch one's stucco pagoda on the perpendicular side of a mountain. Certainty was as bountiful and as cheap as the last crop of oranges.

On the afternoon of Friday, March eleventh, life under the pepper trees had taken on the quality of a yawn, scarcely suppressed. Even the dance orchestras had lost most of their blare. They tinkled faintly like a music box running down, while the granded gentry appeared to be dancing a sarabande on a coffin lid. Profound listlessness had settled over all, an enveloping pall of disinclination that reflected the hazy, sunless sky outside. The old timers muttered "Earthquake weather," but languid newcomers wished only for some easier method of lifting a cocktail glass to their lips.

Then the cosmos seemed to yawn, exhaling tired breath, and the earth stretched like a lazy Negro. To the perceptive person, this prelude to disaster was not even slightly melodramatic. It was natural and slow, like the movement of one in gently arrested sleep. Beginning at one's feet, sensations were absorbed and drawn up into the body. They followed the spine, lingered in the pit of the stomach like a slight digestive disturbance, eventually lodging in the head where the brain appeared to sway and undulate until an impulse toward flight was born.

One blinked a couple of times while becoming aware of the external world. With fantastic uncertainty one discerned that the very mass of ponderable familiarity had shifted, or was in a crazy state of flux. Like an unsteady drunk, one tried to stay one's lurching, tried to focus one's eye on one object. But the fringes on the table lamps were dancing Hottentots and the chandelier was a quivering pendulum, as unreal as the shadows in "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari."

Now from far below inside the earth came the hollow sound of some infinite repercussion, deep, somber. Silent throbbing changed to staccato liveliness as window-frames rattled, glass chipped and tinkled, wood snapped. In a chortling outburst of impermanence every mobile object seemed to shift, snap, break or fall. Then, as if by way of climax, a definite detonation of slowly falling bricks and plaster.

Quiet. Utter quiet. One's watch indicated the passing of thirteen seconds!

II

The scientists at Caltech were to record only seven major temblors until after nine o'clock. Nevertheless every dinner party had already been ruined. The distracted hostess of the Kaufman-Ferber "Dinner at Eight" had nothing to cope with compared to the Beverly Hills matron who awaited her invited guests and the next earthquake with equal dread. It was necessary for her to inspect the ceiling of the dining-room, bring in the cringing servants from the outside by force, make a brave show of regal *savoir faire* when what she really wanted to do was to call the osteopath and then retire to a tent in the back-yard for the remainder of the night.

But there was that damnable tradition of The Show Must Go On. Had not Miss So and So once made her first act entrance promptly after hearing only a moment before that her spouse had been completely dismembered in a motor crash on the way in from Greenwich? The hostess herself had begun her cinema career by wrestling with a toothless lioness in the Selig days. She could not undo the press notices of a decade by even a hint of fear; besides, no longer an ingénue, she had never even rehearsed matronly terror. She would never make a go of it. Even if she could recall the high points of that "Camille" fadeout it would be useless, for she couldn't very well recline at the dinner table.

There was really no need to ponder social questions. Half of Friday's dinner guests had no time even to telephone regrets. Long before they should normally have changed into dinner clothes they had thrown some hand luggage into their cars and were bound for Arizona or Nevada. An English author started back to London on a bus fifteen minutes after the first quake, leaving half a picture in manuscript on his desk. The one really tremendous affair scheduled for the evening never got under way at all. It was to have occurred twelve miles out on a chartered liner, but police lines wouldn't allow the braver guests to force their way into San Pedro and the dock.

The few guests who eventually did find their way to hillside eyries or the Beverly haciendas probably did so after some quick mental calculation about the comparative safety of their host's domicile and their own haven. The apartment and hotel folk were unusually prompt that night. Many of them spent the entire evening party-crashing, for who wanted to sleep on a tenth floor?

Dinners were served, somehow, and divertissement was in order. But since each guest felt perpetual seasickness—the sort which is hopeless since no one knows when the boat will dock—the games had to be less strenuous. Charades such as Who Was The Murderer were obviously impossible: no one had sufficient emotion left even to look guilty. So Contract was employed as a mental stabilizer. Tables could be placed near the doors far from pendant lighting fixtures where each individual could make a run for it without handicap.

But unfortunately there was not to be good Bridge. Few could keep their eyes on the cards. Even the soundest players would interrupt a tentative bid with the mention of what the seismograph recorded at seven-thirty. Indeed "seismograph" had suddenly become the most mispronounced, most frequently used word in the movie colony's parlance. But none found it necessary to be critical. Everyone knew what was meant.

As the minutes passed the radio would intone more horrific facts about the quake interspersed with uneven music "just to help our listeners keep their courage up." Eventually this form of entertainment was to include a dulcified description of the Long Beach morgue, with interpolated portions of "Eadie Was a Lady" while the announcer caught his breath. It was to be observed that even those broadcasters famous for their impetuous descriptions of foot-ball classics were soon rendered vocally impotent by a really super-colossal affair like an earthquake. The sporting clichés were not adequate and there was no convenient band or cheering section to turn on while pages of the thesaurus were quickly thumbed.

After the two severe quakes close to nine o'clock the servants retired with a finality that required no formal "notice." Then you had to pour your own drinks, but somehow you didn't want any. By this time you were convinced that there was a continuous earthquake anyway. The night was no longer punctuated by definite shocks but the very air was vibrant with calamitous change.

There is an end to patience and waiting and probably the refugees in the devastated areas eventually fell asleep beneath the fog-obscured sky, no matter what they were to say next morning. Hollywood folk were no different. The performance had been fatiguing and they simply had to slumber no matter how arduous the preparations.

Some slept in their clothes, comfortably close to means of egress. But by this time the majority were beginning to become resigned. They sought their more familiar beds, making sure that the window was unlatched—just in case.

And sleep was of no new variety. Troubled dreams may have included a derisive, bucking earth instead of the supervisor of New York bankers. But that was all.

III

Morning and some more quakes arrived and the cinema population stormed the news-stands to reserve copies of all Eastern papers that might contain quake news and patronizing comment. The ribald possibilities of the Florida headlines put everyone in a good humor, even those who had neglected to gulp their coffee in their haste to be first. Hollywood loves to read about itself and nocturnal telephones and telegrams had convinced it that the local doom had been earnestly exaggerated—and real cause for delight. Even the fact that a conservative Los Angeles daily had in an editorial masterpiece of understatement so minimized the consequences of the catastrophe that it was rendered piddling, could not diminish the quickening flow of enthusiasm.

As personal terror subsided the principles of true showmanship began to assert themselves. What if a super-attraction had offered ruthless competition for a few ignoble hours? The Hollywood constellation would glow even though the Deluge might play a repeat performance. That was the consensus

(*Continued on Page* 2, *Col.* 1)

Now that 3.2 per cent beer has succeeded so triumphantly in restoring Prosperity, abolishing unemployment, converting guaranteed real estate mortgages into premier investments, and otherwise curing all our economic and social ills, the Editors propose a similar experiment, toward the same richly beneficent ends, in 3.2 Christianity, 3.2 Disarmament, 3.2 anti-Semitism, 3.2 Reparations, and a 3.2 dollar.

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WHEN GOD CAME TO HOLLYWOOD

(*Continued from Page* 1, *Col.* 4)

of virile opinion when the publicity representatives of stars and studios emerged at dawn from Griffith Park where they had spent a shivering night.

While the Red Cross and the Salvation Army rushed to the stricken areas, Hollywood began reconstruction. Typewriters clattered, high-pressure pencils broke by the dozens while the canny force of publicity carpenters repaired Hollywood's dented and cracked celebrity. For twenty-four hours the cinema capital was news only by virtue of geography. That shame might prove eternal, but not if typewriters could help it. And now with a common purpose—the reconstruction of a great myth—party lines and personal quarrels were forgotten. One for all and all for one, the mimes and their mentors, united to reconquer their lost prestige and column inches.

The scribes set themselves no easy job. Nature's toughest blow had been delivered to the East and South of their work-a-day cubicles. No studio was actually wrecked, no tidal wave engulfed hapless Malibu, nor had even one major film star so much as visited a grand-uncle in Long Beach where she might have been crushed or maimed in an end timely and profitable for the film industry. Had such good fortune happened, so reasoned the publicity men, they could have done wonders. Public interest would have exceeded even that shown in the Valentino funeral. They could have grabbed every banner headline in all the second extras and the picture layout would have been a wow. Then her life story could have been run for several weeks, along with the regrets and comments of reputed lovers and all the husbands. Had only one star obliged by straying into Iowa-By-The Sea the problem would have been simplified.

But what had they to work upon? Fortunately the prop department and the make-up experts are the truly imaginative branches of the cinema industry. The former could quickly duplicate or exceed in degree of horror any slice of devastation. That solved the matter of background. Could the elfin Miss Dew be made to look like the receiving end of a terra cotta cornice without destroying the box-office magic of her famous features? After "Dracula" efficient realism was no easy matter. Real punch was hard to deliver. Could they dump the studio water tank over on Mr. Dum's roadster, with a faked close-up of that stalwart's brawny beam sheltering some grateful extra girl? Was it too late to burn Sound Stage Number 3, the one so nicely insured, and blame it on a subsequent quake, or would that look phoney?

Although the writers were used to quick thinking this was once when they were too slow. With all their experience and these excellent fancies already in aspic they forgot human nature. They had neglected to lay hands on their clients. And even then only effective gagging would have served their purpose.

What had happened was this: without any ringmaster the performing ladies and gentlemen had forgotten how to go through their paces. Like the ordinary thousands, they were wandering about, trying to crash the gates at scenes of wreckage. Casually encountered by members of the less rococo press, they had naively blurted out everything. And most shocking of all, when these little asides were solidified in print, any reader the world over might see that the creators of fashions and love cycles had acted in an unforgivable manner. They had done the *normal* things, what anyone else would have done.

IV

Well, the children of fortune had had their day. They had told what they had not been rehearsed to tell. In pantomime and dialogue they had enacted their cowardice and rather too easily remembered comedy bits without benefit of story scripts. They did, in fact, to those who had the pleasure of witnessing them, do the best work of their lives, for which they received no pay, on which no cameras were trained, no "mike" adjacent, no director bellowing, not even the supervisor with his smudgy cost sheet—which happened to be the one for another production entirely.

And more remarkable still, having been themselves and having admitted their humanity publicly, the Glittering Great presently indulged in the luxury of self-effacement. With compelling candor they became just plain everyday folk. Then, like the thousands of others who by this seismic initiation had earned for themselves the final right to be called Californians, they went to their scarcely used desks where they quickly wrote to their Times Square friends: "You *bums*. What a swell show *you* missed by going to that lousy Florida!"

SERVANTS OF GOD
No. 9

From the Syracuse, N. Y., Herald:

"THIS BEER ORGY,
AND THE DEVIL TO PAY"

Who Is Satan, Anyway? Does He Really Wield a Red Hot Pitchfork or a Beer Bottle and a Stein?

Did a Good God Make a Bad Devil?

Hear Claude E. Eldridge
Sunday, 7:30 P.M.

7th DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
Sou'h Ave., Near W. Castle St.

L'ANGLETERRE SANS LES INDES

by JAMES LAVER

NATIONAL character is often spoken of as if it were something inimitable and inevitable, and the English character in particular is regarded as a thing so completely fixed that nothing could change it. This, however, is the very reverse of the truth. The English character has changed within quite recent times, and is quite likely to change again. Nothing is stranger in reading English history than to realize that the heroes of the past—Elizabethan adventurers and poets, eighteenth century soldiers and statesmen, even Nelson, recent as he is—were something quite different from what we have come to look upon as typical Englishmen. A Raleigh swaggering in fantastic clothes, a Wolfe reciting Gray's "Elegy" as he went into battle, Nelson—Nelson, above all—behaving like an operatic tenor, and an Italian one at that, on the deck of his own battleship, these seem hardly credible embodiments of the English spirit.

The picture firmly fixed in the minds of all Continentals is that of a thin, somewhat bony, man with prominent features, complete absence of gesture, and imperturbable *sang-froid*. You find him in the early nineteenth century French caricatures; you find him practising his doctrine of *nil admirari* in the novels of Merimée. With no admiration for foreign manners, with a profound contempt for European culture, his only reason for travel (and he is a great traveler) would seem to be the indulgence of a sense of racial superiority. "Good form" is his god, but does not forbid him to be rude to inferior races. His love is as cold as his anger; his vices, if he has any, are carefully concealed; and he is firmly convinced of his mission to impose upon the rest of the world his ideal of "fair play"—if necessary by force of arms.

This, no doubt, is a hostile picture, but if we omit the element of hypocrisy, most nineteenth century Englishmen would have been prepared to accept it as true and to defend it as admirable. Whence sprang this ideal Englishman and how came it about that he was so universally accepted at home and abroad?

The answer is a comparatively simple one. He was the result of two different but related things: the conquest of India and the character of the Duke of Wellington. In so far as the future Wellington consolidated the victories of Clive, the two causes are one, but his personal characteristics lent the ideal Englishman his form, features and manner. Even his persistent preference for civilian dress—his very uniforms were a kind of negligé—imposed itself so completely that a modern Guards officer thinks it "bad form" to be seen in the street in regimentals, unless he is actually marching at the head of his column.

The generation following that of Waterloo was extremely fond of travel. The upper-class Englishman was always going to "the Continent," and he became a familiar figure in France, Italy and Germany. But this upper-class Englishman was just the one who modelled himself most completely on "the Duke," with the result that Europeans came to look upon all Englishmen as tacturn, stiff and unemotional. The legend of *phlegm britannique* became so firmly fixed that French school-books to this day contain stories of the insensitiveness and impregnable *sang-froid* of the English.

The personal influence of Wellington, however, might soon have failed if it had not been for the other factor: the conquest of India. The weight of that teeming peninsula, almost a continent in itself, was suddenly thrown on the English neck. It is perhaps not surprising that the English back stiffened. When it became obvious that India was something not only to be exploited, but ruled, the new responsibilities were bound to be reflected in the whole tenor of English education.

It was some time, of course, before the full effect was felt, but by the middle of the nineteenth century it is no exaggeration to say that the newly reorganized English public school system was directed consciously, or unconsciously, to one end: the creation of pro-consuls, of men who would rule an alien race—with justice and firmness but without allowing themselves to be influenced in the slightest degree by an alien culture. The public-school curriculum, games and all, was devoted to this end. No one unacquainted with the English upper classes can realize to what extent their members have been involved in the task of governing India. Even now the typical inhabitant of the exclusive clubs is a man who has hardened his arteries and ruined his liver by twenty years as Indian magistrate or soldier.

The last few years have seen a great change. The upper classes (or upper-middle classes) have still enormous influence in home politics but their monopoly is over. The lower classes do not understand Indian problems, and might not think it worth while to hold India if they did. India itself has become conscious of Nationalism, and is visibly impatient of the British *raj*

From the English point of view India has already ceased to provide the ideal career for younger sons. The whole situation may be radically changed in our own lifetime.

If the English control of India should be broken up, the English character, as it is generally known, will probably break up too. It is an interesting possibility, this re-emergence of the pre-Wellingtonian Englishman, and if it happens we may yet see English generals go into battle like Wolfe, reciting poetry, and English admirals, stricken like Nelson, lean forward in their death agony to whisper: "Kiss me, Hardy!"

TOWNSEND

by THEODORE DREISER

WHEREVER I encounter clerkly crowds I think of Townsend. The neatness, the punctuality, the importance of being earnest. Years ago, say thirty, Townsend was employed by a small clothing store as a clerk. It was a mere beginning for a young man of eighteen and he did not like it. Confined in the same rooming-house with myself, he told me after no more than ten days' acquaintance that he felt it beneath him. At that time he wanted to become an investigator for R. G. Dun & Co., or Bradstreet; because the work would take him out of doors investigating commercial cases and references. Also it promised to lead to something which promised much better. He wished and hoped to be a public accountant because he might then come into contact with all sorts of business houses and investigate and estimate their solvency and reliability.

At some business school he had once attended he had heard that such men made almost fabulous sums: ten, fifteen, even twenty thousand dollars a year. With fifteen thousand he found himself dreaming of heavenly things: taking a trip to Europe, marrying a rich girl, going to the opera and society affairs in a dress suit, and possibly living in a charming little house in some ultra-respectable New York suburb.

To Townsend, that would make a life. It spelled friends, respect, social connections. He was certain that by hard work he would achieve all this. And every morning, his room being next to mine, I heard his alarm clock ring at seven. By seven-fifteen, being a man, as he said, who liked to allow for a little leisure, he could be heard entering his bathroom. By seven-thirty he was off for breakfast. And by eight on his way to his clothing store. At night, at six-thirty, he was back in his room.

One of his chief interests, I noted, was the Vanderbilt family: where they went and what they did. Unaware as they were of his interest, he followed their every movement; to London, to Paris, to Cairo, to Florida, to the South Seas.

Another person who interested him enormously was John D. Rockefeller: the fact that he was a Baptist, that he conducted personally a Sunday school class in a Fifth Avenue Church, and that he advocated thrift and gave new dimes to his aspiring students. Townsend even rose earlier on Sundays than he otherwise need have, in order to attend Mr. Rockefeller's classes, to listen with a certain amount of awe and at the same time with just a little irony. For Townsend was, of course, poor and not exactly religious. Yet, as he said, there was something in Mr. Rockefeller's insistence that every young man accumulate at least a thousand dollars before he began seriously to consider a commercial opportunity. With a thousand dollars in hand one apparently found oneself. One could pick and choose. Townsend was planning to save a thousand dollars.

Then five years passed before I saw him again. By that time he had considerably improved his condition. He was no longer a clothing salesman. No, no! He was now connected, as he had hoped, with R. G. Dun and Co. as investigator of the financial conditions of small concerns. His salary was much larger: twenty-five dollars a week. His clothes were as neat as one would expect of an exclothing salesman. The season's hat, suit, shoes. Of a rather pale and even wax-like appearance, his apparel as a whole blended as well as contrasted with his waxy pallor. However, on Sundays, he resorted to a top hat, cut-away coat, striped trousers, patent leather shoes, spats, and even a cane. And still in awe of the social elect and Mr. Rockefeller, he liked to attend fashionable Fifth Avenue churches, to be able, aside from his awe, now and then to reflect on the uncharity of so many others who occupied the more expensive pews.

For by this time, I noted, the implications of experience were by no means beyond Townsend. Investigating small merchants of various lines and levels, he had been not a little shocked and even astounded by the insincerities, the trickeries and, generally speaking, the wiles of men. Among small tradesmen in general, as he now told me, it was rare that one encountered frankness or sincerity or even honesty, to any appreciable degree. They did not always keep correct books, or if they did, they wouldn't let you look at them. They told lies about their resources. They bought goods on false representations of their responsibility, and sold them either without paying, or so slowly as to make it impossible for a reputable firm to deal with them. Not only that, but there were downright thieves, hundreds of them, who stocked up with as much property as they could on credit and then either failed or indulged in a fire. When he was a clothing clerk he would not have believed that wholesalers were preyed upon by such swarms of banditti. Honesty as Townsend was beginning to see it, was a rare virtue. He himself had concluded that, inexperienced as he was, it was best for him not to venture upon any commercial enterprise. All the money he had was in a savings bank. And there it would remain until he was much more secure than he was at present.

Besides, as he added, he was generally disillusioned. So many of the rich were either crooks or parasites. They had no particular interest in the welfare of the common man. Look at *him*. Already he had worked over four years for the concern with which he was then connected. And he had become skilful and profitable in all the duties assigned to him. But had he had a raise? Certainly not one commensurate with his efforts. Although he had begun at the age of eighteen, he was still getting only a beggarly twenty-five dollars a week. Nevertheless, as he told me, he was carrying on. There was a likelihood that soon he would get a job in the credit department of Wanamaker's where he would be secure and make a little more money.

II

And then another lapse; this time of seven years. He was now a somewhat sobered clerk of thirty. He had married and was living in Tuckahoe. Wanamaker's, as he had explained, was a thing of the past. The opportunity for advancement there had not been what he anticipated. Besides, experience had fitted him for something better. And having had training in the jewelry and silverware department of that concern, he had applied for and achieved the position of assistant secretary to what, I believe, he described as the Jewelers' Board of Trade. It was not a national but a local association of jewelers, which was affiliated with a national body of the same character. And his business was not only to investigate the reliability of retail jewelers but to direct such investigation on the part of several clerks who worked for him.

By now, also, he told me, his salary was all of forty dollars a week. He had a small suburban home of his own, a daughter, aged seven, for whom, as I could see, he entertained the liveliest affection. Editha was a healthy, lovely paragon of a child and he and his wife revelled in her. Also, his wife belonged to a little suburban club. More, life was not as dark now, although tradesmen were as crooked as ever. What deceivers! What shifty cheats! Just the same, America was the land of opportunity. If a man worked and attended strictly to his business he could achieve success. To be sure, it was no easy matter. His duties were very arduous. He had to hurry here and there, often to one city and another. But the chief thing I observed was that Townsend was proud of his higher estate and his larger duties. He liked traveling. He passed as a man of affairs. And he was, I noted, a little stouter, somewhat more sober in his demeanor, and a man who was devoted to the newspapers and moving pictures, which latter had by then appeared and were coloring such leisure as he allowed himself. Editha was going to be sent to some special school somewhere. He and his wife, at some later date, were assuredly going abroad.

And then seven more years. By that time Townsend was none other than the secretary of the Jewelers' Board of Trade. He was forty years old and slightly more managerial than clerkish, and also more conventional than ever. The only trouble at this time was that he had discovered that he was never to achieve the public accountancy of his dreams. Also, that more than likely he was to remain secretary of an organization which at best could afford to pay only five thousand dollars a year. And at that moment he was getting only four thousand.

Interestingly enough, married life had not exactly palled on him but had been combined with temperamental and other changes which had made it less satisfactory than it might have been. For one thing, the best society of Tuckahoe had not received either him or his wife. She had not been able to achieve the smartest golf and bridge club and had decided that they had best return and live in New York. A second child, a boy, had been born and died. Editha, by now seventeen, had graduated from school and, while obviously waiting for marriage, was idling about the house. His wife, I gathered, was not entirely satisfied with his career. There had been a quarrel over some man. At one time she and Editha had left him for as long as three years. But eventually she had returned, and the boy who died had been the result.

Townsend's hair was already a little thin. In studying him, I could feel the waning of ambition. Getting up in the morning to be at the office by nine was no longer eased by the hope and ambition of youth, but darkened by satiety and responsibility. Say what you would, life was not, for him at least, what he had expected. The best one could do, as he now blandly announced, was to make the best of it. One's friends failed one, or disappeared, or died. His own father and mother had died and he himself was beginning to realize that presently age would be overtaking him. One of the facts that he revealed to me was that he had burdened himself with considerable life insurance to protect his wife and Editha. Also that, with savings out of his salary, he had been able to make some investments in the safest of all stocks—railroads, General Electric, the automobile and the moving picture industries. He had, he said, enough to see him through, and the rest might be what it would.

III

Then, in 1929, came the panic. And in 1930 it was that I again encountered Townsend. By this time, he appeared greatly strained and changed. Conditions with him were bad, although as yet not hopeless. He had lost a great deal of money in stocks. His life insurance was proving a burden.

When I inquired how much he had lost he made it plain that, counting a paper profit in 1928 as real, he had been worth thirty thousand dollars. But owing to the amazing decline of everything, that had already shrunk to about six or eight. Yet holding such excellent stocks as he did, he had decided to hang on. Prosperity was bound to return. Everybody said so. Only the salary of five thousand dollars which he had actually achieved in the Spring of 1928 had already been cut to three thousand five hundred and might soon be less. For, of course, the jewelry business had suffered an enormous decline. Even his job was not really sure. More, the apartment in Central Park West, which in his prosperity he had chosen to lease, had already been abandoned. And since Editha had married and gone with her young husband to Omaha, he and his wife had taken a much smaller place in a further uptown cross-town street, where, he did not say.

By January, 1932, I was in receipt of a letter from him. He hated to admit it but he was in a very bad way indeed. He had been discharged. His wife was sick. But what had brought him to me was the fact that, having recently pledged all of his very much shrunken stocks for a loan of eight hundred dollars, his bank, from which he had obtained the loan, was demanding that he either furnish additional security to cover his loan or his stocks would have to be sold—and in addition he would be sued for a difference already due. He had come to me to ask what to do. Also to obtain, if possible, a hundred dollars. I gave him the hundred and heard no more for three months.

By that time, however, the money I had given him was apparently gone. And in addition, as he explained, although he had tried constantly to get work of any kind, it was almost impossible. In some instances having succeeded in getting a job by paying five dollars for it, he found that it was only to be discharged after a day or a week.

Another complaint was that, having worked so long as secretary, he found it difficult to fit himself to other work, manual work in particular. Having tried working in one of the New York parks as one of the aided unemployed, he had found that it was too much. It had made him ill. And as before in the case of other jobs, he had to pay five dollars to get the job, and then after three or four days it was taken from him, obviously to make room for some other man who had also paid five. Also, one or two times, he had returned to his clerk work in alleged fire or failure sales, only to find that the sale lasted but a few days, at the end of which period his employers were without funds or had mysteriously disappeared.

By now, he was greatly depleted physically. His face was bloodless, his eyes sunken. And his clothes were shabby and baggy At my astonishment, he volunteered the only socio-economic philosophy I ever heard him voice. It was to the effect that there must be something wrong with this country and that if the Republicans didn't do better the people would certainly give the Democrats a chance—a change which, as I could see, was the same as a revolution to him. My comment was that the Democrats should certainly be given a chance.

But that was not the end. There was a return visit at which he requested fifty dollars. In connection with the gift of this I noticed a still further change in him. For by then, in addition to wearing clothes that were frayed and dirty, his shoes were cracked and his whole body had taken on a sagging appearance. He looked as though he might have been waiting in bread-lines. His flesh was not only pale but sickly, a bluish tinge about the lips and cheeks. His wife, he informed me, had died, and in order to bury her, he had had to cancel his life insurance. But he was unwilling to tell me where he was living. All he would say was that he was living in a small room. So marked was his decline that I wondered whether I would ever see him again.

After that there were two additional returns: once to ask a loan of twenty-five dollars and a second to ask for a loan of ten. On the last occasion I noted that he did not venture to enter the hotel in which I was living, and for obvious reasons. His clothes and general appearance were such that it was more than likely he would have been stopped at the door. Instead he had hung about outside, encountering me as I came out. But when he did, he seemed to be in a hurry, not waiting to linger or explain, and said that if I would only give him ten it would be the last time he would bother me. He was very much pressed. Hungry even.

I never saw him after that, although I was convinced as he left me that he had no one else to turn to. His daughter—his son-in-law—why inquire? They were probably as badly off as himself or he didn't want to go to them. Just the same, I did hear of his death. It came in the form of a letter. The writer stated that one of her roomers, Walter Townsend by name, had died of the consequences of a cold that had been contracted but a few days before. On his desk she had found a note which he had begun and which was addressed to me, a request that I call.

VULGARITY

(*Continued from Page* 1, *Col.* 3)

suggesting the grosser physiological functions. No other country on earth is so fertile in concocting new euphemisms to conceal the persistent fact that man is endowed with a colon and a pair of kidneys. So, whereas Paris with cavalier nonchalance boldly studs its boulevards and public squares with convenient and inviting *pissoirs*, and adorns the more strategic corners of its public buildings (including the Chambre des Députés) with frank and necessary *Défense d'Uriner* signs; and whereas Europe for all its three thousand years of civilization and culture still calls certain retreats by the classic name of watercloset, America has devised dozens of names to remove the physiological stigma from such havens. The sensibilities of Americans are thus tenderly guarded by labeling the water-closet with such refined designations as toilet, lavatory, washroom, retiring-room, lounging-room, smoking-room, rest-room, club-room, and powder-room.

All this fuss about a simple biological fact that Europe accepted generations ago is symptomatic: again revealing the American's attempt to cover up a humble and commonplace matter with gaudy and sumptuous embellishments, and a consciousness of an innate sordidness that must, somehow, be compensated for by showy pretense and deceptive sham. This, in fine, is the earmark of vulgarity.

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A COLUMN OF NOTES

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

CENSORS.— A scrutiny of the latest records of the New York State Board of Film Censorship reveals, among many others of a piece, such indignantly ordered deletions of screen lines as these: "We live together"; "Of course, if you want to change your meal-ticket"; "Let's go into the garden—and walk"; "Your wedding ring hasn't lived in vain"; "The truth is the truth and Christian is your child"; "I'm the guy that loves 'em and leaves 'em"; "It won't take me long *to pack my toothbrush*"; "Say, Blondie, what's your hurry?"; and "You look a little pale. You forgot your lipstick, didn't you?" Also the demanded elimination of such shots as these: "view of Mario asleep on balcony and view of his awakening and doing gymnastics"; "view of long kiss in garden"; and "all but one view of man spanking child on posterior."

Could anything be more utterly absurd? Thus does official censorship safeguard the morals of young and old. Meanwhile, this very same body of screen censors freely allows the Mlle. Mae West in the film, "She Done Him Wrong," to sing the filthiest song ever sung in public in America; all the school kids are having the time of their lives reading *the Nexts;* and all the married women with copies of D. H. Lawrence under their arms are wondering what is wrong with their husbands.

* * *

Publishers.—While the book publishers are still scratching their heads wondering why their ledgers are as red as they unquestionably are, it may be suggested that one possible reason is their uniform and foolish habit of centering all of their advertising and salesmanship energy upon any Best-Seller that they may happen to find on their list at the expense of all the other books on the list that aren't selling well. If a department store owner or any other such business man were to follow the publishers' principle, it doesn't take a fortune-teller to tell what would happen to him. Nor does it take a fortune-teller to tell what will happen to the publishers if they persist in their present practise. A good business man tries to sell not what is already selling well on its own account, but those articles in his stock which are not selling well and which call for some ingenuity and strategy in salesmanship. A Best-Seller has ruined more publishers in the long run than any fifty other books that have sold only a few thousand each. A publisher's prosperity is often where he least thinks to look for it: under his counter in the stock room. And a publisher's loss, due to his shortsightedness and lack of business acumen, is more generally in the same place.

* * *

Doctors.—We have been reading a lot of late in the public prints of the hostile attitude toward doctors, their bills, and their method of personal and professional procedure. I do not purpose extending the comment save for one point, to wit, the general habit on the part of physicians of disguising as a personally conjured up prescription some more or less well-known preparation to be found readily on any drug-store shelf. A doctor is shrewd enough to realize that if he tells a patient simply to go around the corner and buy a bottle of this or that, the patient will fork out his fee with considerable misgivings as to the doctor's great medical and therapeutical sagacity. So the doctor cannily wrinkles his brow, licks the tip of his pencil several times and with a large show of concentrated thought laboriously writes out the ingredients of the bottle of patent medicine, in indecipherable script, on one of his engraved prescription blanks. That the patent medicine entrepreneurs are privy to this monkey-business—and to what is at bottom an ethical swindle—is evidenced on the backs of the labels of any number of their standard products. I quote an example in the case of the preparation manufactured by Parke, Davis and Co., of Detroit, and called "Metatone." On the front of the label is a simple, sufficient and satisfactory description of the nature of the tonic. On the reverse side is this legend: "When physicians prescribe original packages, remove this label and attach prescription labels."

* * *

Heil, Hitler!—Hitler has banned the intermarriage of Jews and Gentiles. The Assembly and Senate of the State of California have sent to the Governor two bills banning the intermarriage of Filipinos and white Americans.

Hitler has declared against "Jew money from Hamburg." The circuit solicitor of Morgan County, Alabama, has declared against "Jew money from New York."

Hitler has opposed and persecuted the Jews as a race, knocking the block off some of them. The United States, on the part of sections of its free citizenry, has opposed and persecuted the Negroes as a race, lynching and burning at the stake scores upon scores of them.

Hitler has persecuted persons of Jewish faith, driving them into Switzerland. The United States has persecuted persons of Mormon faith, driving them at one time into the western wilderness.

Hitler has removed Jews from hospital posts. Hospital officials in Brooklyn and New York less than a year ago removed Jews from similar posts.

Hitler will not tolerate Bruno Walter as an orchestra conductor. For three years the United States would not tolerate Fritz Kreisler as a violinist.

Hitler has banned the works of Lion Feuchtwanger and Emil Ludwig. The United States has banned the works of James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence.

Hitler is against Communists, the Brown Shirts giving them a stiff dose of clubs. The United States is against Communists, the Blue Coats giving them a stiff dose of clubs.

Hitler opposes the immigration of Polish and Russian Jews. The United States opposes the immigration of Japanese and Chinese.

Hitler was instrumental in the deportation of Einstein. The United States was instrumental in the deportation of Gorki.

Hitler has allowed the Nazis to raid private premises without search warrants. The United States has allowed the Federal Revenuers to raid private premises without search warrants.

Hitler's Nazis wrecked the stores and houses of Jews. America's Ku Klux Klan wrecked the stores and houses of Negroes—also, here and there, of Jews.

Hitler has been instrumental in keeping 100,000 Jews from earning a living. The United States, at this moment, is keeping 12,000,000 men and women of all races from earning a living.

Hitler is for a single, united Germany, under one positive rule. Lincoln was for a single, united America, under one positive rule.

Heil, Hitler!

SERVANTS OF GOD
No. 10

Associated Press Dispatch to the New York Sun:

GENEVA, Ill.—Jesse L. Livermore, New York and Chicago broker, was married secretly here last Friday to Mrs. Harriet Metz Noble of Omaha. The Rev. Frazer Bell, pastor of the Congregational Church, was reported to have performed the ceremony. The Rev. Mr. Bell denied today he had married the couple, but Justice of the Peace W. A. Kaiser said he was positive the minister performed the ceremony. "He told me," Kaiser said, "that he married them and that Livermore gave him $35 to keep quiet."

PHOTOSTATIC COPIES

A Tragic Episode of the World War

by JOHN CAMPBELL

FROM an old clerk in the passport office at Memel, I recently heard a peculiar tale of mistaken identity which had so disturbed official Berlin in 1917 that the Kaiser himself supervised the ensuing investigation. It all occurred over the misguided enthusiasm for amateur photography of a group of amazon police matrons whose act introduced a new identification department into the Secret Service organization of the German Empire.

Though her real name is on the back of the original plates, let us call the unfortunate victim of the incident Effie Hemingway. She is a socially prominent New Yorker and together with her husband, Schuyler Hemingway, was traveling in Russia during the early days of 1917.

As the story goes, a friendly member of the American consulate in Moscow had warned Mr. Hemingway that trouble was in the offing and that they would do well to leave Russia at once, via Sweden. Effie didn't relish such an abrupt departure as she was having a delightful time in the night clubs and was adding considerably to her famous repertory of gypsy and shady songs. Never, she mused, would her Summer cocktail musicales at Southampton have so many new and unknown numbers in their programs.

Finally, her husband won out and they planned to leave after one more revel under the many chins of Balieff at "The Bat."

It so happened that on this particular night a wandering minstrel from the Crimea sang a special set of his own lyrics, in Russian, French, German and English, to well-known tunes. The affable Nikita assured Effie that their wit was unique and that the author-singer was a genius. Effie refused to leave without copies, so the minstrel, who maintained there were no printed versions, sat down and carefully wrote out four pages which he presented to her.

They left the cabaret just half an hour before their train to St. Petersburg, so Effie stuck the lyrics in her muff. On arriving at the capital, however, they changed their minds and decided to cross via Riga and skirt the edge of the Baltic into Germany. The entrance into that country wasn't so difficult, but it was just their luck that Berlin at the moment was hearing rumors of two Swiss spies, posing as Americans, who were believed to be going from Russia to Holland.

At one station Effie alighted to buy chocolate and a few postcards. The station-master, glancing at the recently received manifesto about the spies, was sure that hers was a Swiss voice trying to speak German with an American accent. So Effie and her husband were taken from the train. Some say it was at Memel or Koenigsburg, but my informant was sure that it was at a smaller town farther South, such as Marienwerder, where only the ignorance of the officials could give rise to the subsequent embarrassments of both the Hemingways and the Imperial government.

As the night wore on, they were searched and while a burly police matron was being sought all of their clothes were taken away.

The late hour prevented a large crowd from gathering to witness the sad spectacle of two Americans, hopelessly naked, in the waiting-room of the station. Happily there was still some warmth in the stove so, when their clothes were finally and completely removed, the Hemingways stood in front of the embering cockles. Effie had been left a fur-piece and her new muff, also a hand-bag which was scheduled to be taken from her when the matron arrived.

Mr. Hemingway was philosophical about the entire situation and calmly smoked his last cigar, whereas Effie grew more and more impatient over the non-arrival of the matron. Finally she asked her

(*Continued on Page 4, Col. 5*)

BUSINESS—AS USUAL

by ERNEST BOYD

ONE thing that can be said about Prosperity is that it never, even in the brightest days of the Harding, Coolidge, and early Hoover régimes, perceptibly lightened the eternal gloom of authors, publishers and booksellers. It may be that once upon a time—in the Gilded Age, in the Age of Innocence, or maybe only in the Golden Age—these three victims of the world of books were heard to admit that disaster was not imminent, that all was not over. Consequently, when the skies darkened, when the ledgers of other businesses were incarnadined, less was heard from these gentlemen about the Depression than from any other section of the community. They admitted, as usual, that they were broke, that business was in a bad way, but there was less indignation in their voices. It was as if they felt that justice had finally been dealt to all, that it would be a little obscene to stress the obvious facts of business as they knew it, merely because other dreamers were now in the same old boat as themselves.

It is true that a few minor publishers have discreetly retired from the scene, by process of amalgamation for the most part, indicating that they must have had some assets with which to save themselves from utter annihilation. But there have been few absolute failures; no publishing firms of the first rank have been revealed as shells so hollow as to suggest comparisons with our bank and trust companies. One outstanding book shop has been put into the hands of receivers, and some of the smaller and usually highly specialized shops have surrendered to the inevitable, or are about to do so. But there are still too many books published and too many people trying—as ineffectually as ever—to sell them. Such writers as have voluntarily joined their Redeemer, or sought relief in the bankruptcy courts, have not been more numerous than in times of Prosperity. Business as usual, one might say, has been the motto of all concerned.

It would be consoling to record that this happy paradox is a proof that the impractical idealists, who sacrificed more lucrative careers to the nobler task of producing and purveying the printed word, have turned out to be shrewder, more foresighted, and more efficient than their practical colleagues in the more sordid marts of trade. Expert research has established the fact that the American public buys approximately two books per person per year, and pays for books not more than one half of one per cent of its annual income. Against this may be set the figure of $3,000,000,000 spent on motoring, and that every week 115,000,000 people attend the movies. Radios, candy, and greeting cards represent expenditures of from eleven to twenty-eight times the amount spent on books. The libraries of the United States and Canada have circulated but two books a year for each man, woman and child, the cost of this effort being only thirty-two cents *per caput* from public and private bank accounts.

Is it any wonder that Prosperity meant very little to those whose livelihood depended in any way upon the production and distribution of books? Nor is it any wonder that Depression finds them resigned to the worst, to which they are accustomed. The real wonder is that they survive at all, particularly when one thinks of the weird mysteries of the publishing and bookselling businesses. When an author has written his book and found a publisher for it, one would think that he had done his share, and that the rest is the professed duty and responsibility of those who manufacture and distribute his wares. In this he is mistaken. If the book does not sell, it is his fault. If he does not know how to advertise it with effective blurbs and other even more ignoble publicity devices, he is accused of not co-operating. He is supposed to help the advertising experts, but they would be greatly incensed if he, in turn, called upon them to finish a difficult chapter of his manuscript.

If, as noted elsewhere in this issue, the book does sell and is popular, money is squandered in advertising it, and less fortunate works must languish because there is no advertising appropriation available to promote their sales. All publishers declare that neither advertising nor reviewing sells books, yet they send advertising copy and review copies to the press. It is understood that this is done merely to humor the childish whims of literary gents. The notion that there is advertising and advertising, reviewing and reviewing, is not entertained when this perennial topic is discussed. The time, the place, the reviewer, might make a difference.

In many years of regular weekly book reviewing, I almost never received automatically the kind of book which would naturally interest me and in which I could possibly interest my readers. Having formally notified every publisher that I did not review fiction, my mail was deluged five days a week with galleys, page proofs and advance copies of novels, mostly tripe. Out of any dozen of the daily letters and special appeals for attention, at least ten referred to fiction. In a file of articles written every week for five years ninety-five per cent of the books discussed were non-fiction. Ninety per cent of these would not have reached me had I not specially requested them. Meanwhile the junk-man was calling for stacks of unread and unreadable books, which were unloaded upon me remorselessly and with fervent encomiums.

II

It is hardly necessary to point out that such methods of salesmanship and promotion, if applied to any other business, would make even a sales-resistance breaker laugh. To waste money on what is successful, and then prove that one has no funds with which to help the success of something that needs and deserves such help, is a form of procedure which amuses when presented at the Mad Hatter's tea party, but raises not even a smile—though sometimes a groan—in the publishing world. When a publisher and a bookseller succeed with a book, that is news; their failures are interred with their bones, but not until then.

The author, on the other hand, whose books do not sell, is deprived of the only asset he possesses, to wit, the recognition of his talent. His reputation is interred, not with his bones, but with his living career. Yet, he has fulfilled his part; he has given what he promised; he has done his best. Clearly, granted he has merit—and the history of literature is strewn with such cases—the failure must rest upon other shoulders than his. On whose? The publisher's? The booksellers'? Both will frequently allow that the author has lived up to his contract, that he has written a good book, even a superior one. There *are* people in the book business, apart from authors, who actually read and admire first-rate work. Sometimes this is hard to believe, but it is true. Unfortunately, whether true or not, once the author is exonerated, the onus of failure is transferred to the public. People don't read; advertising doesn't pay, etc., etc.,—all the stereotyped phrases are invoked.

Inasmuch as the public, according to experience and statistics, never has read, and, according to theory, only books that are selling should be advertised, neither of these pleas carries much conviction. A good book of its kind in any class of literature, which does not reach its appropriate audience in sufficient numbers, must be a book which has been mishandled at some stage between its emergence as a complete volume from the binders and its mournful last appearance, prior to pulping, as a marked-down bargain on Broadway, or at the corner drug-store, flanked by such masterpieces of pseudo-eroticism as have escaped the jurisconsults who take their æsthetic opinions from Mr. John S. Sumner and his compeers. If one tries to probe into this devious problem, one reaches a bourne from which no traveler returns convinced, save the traveling salesmen whose function it is to induce the booksellers to order and re-order, and who rarely succeed in either, because the books in question are not the kind of books that it is easy to sell. Why waste time in getting an order for six copies of an immortal volume on astro-physics if in two minutes one can get a re-order for another twenty-five copies of "Female"?

Further, a much finer window display can be made of a bright novel or travel book that is selling popularly than of the latest volume of Mr. Keynes' essays. Nothing will ever persuade the typical bookseller that an illiterate crowd gawking at the oar of the boat in which Nansen reached the North Pole in a shop window is not a potential mass of bookbuyers. I have often cherished the dream of introducing a bookseller to a bookbuyer, a tribe which I know so well that I can always be sure that eight booksellers out of every ten have not the faintest notion of its tastes, habits and mental processes. If a bookbuyer receives the faintest intimation that a book exists of the kind in which he is interested, he will get it, if he has to emulate those messengers so fancifully described over the portals of the New York General Post Office. He is usually born; and he is most emphatically *not* made by a window display of the pajamas worn by George Moore at Orelay.

ENGLISH MEN OF LETTERS SERIES
No. 8

F. Yeats-Brown, reviewing "An Indian Monk," by Shri Purohit Swami, in the London *Spectator:*

"We read some amazing stories of the habits and powers of Mahatmas. One was able to stop a railway train from starting. Another could vanish from a locked room. A third stayed in the house of a courtesan, and consorted with drunkards, yet was renowned for his sanctity. Although some parts of the Swami's story are incredible, we must not ask of him that the world of his thought and sense-perception should square with ours. For instance, in this account of a vigil in the temple where the Lord Dattatreya is traditionally reputed to take His rest, we may accept the spirit of the Swami's devotion without straining our belief in the miraculous:

'I decked the bed of the Lord with garlands till everything looked beautiful. I was sure that the Lord would be pleased with this service. The room was locked, and the priest took away the key. I squatted on the floor as usual. . . . The door opened at His knock. I stood aghast while it was silently closed; then I heard the creaking noise of the bed as if someone was lying down on it. I moved to the door and could hear sounds quite clearly as though someone was turning over from side to side. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with perfume. I watched with rapt attention. There was no doubt in my mind that the Lord was enjoying His rest. In the morning the door opened and was shut again; the sound of the Lord's pattens was heard going away, and sweet perfume filled the air. The Lord had gone.'"

SERVANTS OF GOD
(The Rising Generation)
No. 11

From the New York World-Telegram:

Leo Sharff, 25, son of Rabbi Meier Sharff, of Congregation Torah Chaim, who was charged with punching Marcus Scherer, vice-president of the synagogue, was discharged in Bay Ridge Court, Brooklyn, today when the complainant failed to appear.

The altercation in the synagogue followed an announcement by Rabbi Sharff that kosher butchers ought to pay him $6 a month, instead of $3, the present rate. When the vice-president protested, it was alleged young Sharff puched his nose.

A LECTURE FOR DOROTHY

by BRANCH CABELL

WRITING in behalf of the two literary societies of your college, you, my dear Dorothy, have asked if, and when, and at what fee per evening, I would agree to lecture in your college auditorium, as to whatsoever topic I may elect (although you aidfully add you are certain that "a message" from me concerning Modern Trends in Literature would be of deep interest to the students, the faculty, and their friends), and you have asked also that I advise you whether "anything along this line" would be "worth my while."

To be frank with you, Dorothy, it would not be worth my while, nor your while either. I still marvel, with an aged and resigned wonder, at the quaint notion that some possible profit is to be got, by anybody concerned, from inducing the professional man of letters to lecture. You would not ask (I imagine) that same author, in just this off-hand fashion, to perform upon the college auditorium piano, before the students, the faculty, and their friends, or to adorn the auditorium walls with mural paintings. You would incline, first, to make sure of his musical gifts or of his ability to paint. Nor—and this is an analogue even more exact—nor would you address to that author an invitation to appear, upon a set evening, before the students, the faculty, and their friends, and thereupon to enliven the gathering by singing "Celeste Aida" or "The Last Rose of Summer." The singer and the author (along with the actor, the lecturer, and the cross-word-puzzle maker) do utilize a common material, in that each of them employs words; and yet, after hardly more than a half-hour's steady thinking about this matter, you will begin to divine, my dear Dorothy, that all these persons use words variously, in accord with the tenets and the limitations of perceptibly different arts.

I grant that members of a race so multifarious as to produce both men and women may be able in more than one art. It is humanly possible, I mean, for an author to "speak" passably: but the event is rare. Looking back through a long and terrible vista of auctorial lectures, I can recall one woman writer who "spoke" (upon I have no least notion what subject) with a simple and cordial virtuosity such as kept me through a contented hour's length mentally purring. I delight, because of that well-nigh unique memory, to acclaim here, in Zona Gale, an actually accomplished writer who actually can "speak," and with whom "speaking" is a fine art finely practised. To the other side, without any unwise name-calling, I think of a woman who has published sundry volumes of the most bland and charming essays ever penned by an American, and of her dictatorial, her sullen, and her gross conduct of the one lecture I was fated to hear her deliver. That was an all-tragic afternoon, which robbed me forever of any further pleasure in the writings of an over large and regrettably vocal snapping turtle.

The epiphany of this harridan remains to me, I repeat, a continued distress—and yet, only in degree. For how many other soul-chilling, how many haggardly vivacious females do I recall, all of whom "spoke" upon the inconsequent ground that they knew more or less about writing! And with what circumspection did I shun their books afterward!

II.

As for male authors, I clap one hand on my heart, and rest the other hand on the family Bible, in the while I protest that every one of them whom I have heard "speak" showed then at his worst. Even did he orate smoothly, without fidgets, without forlornly clearing his throat, and without too often seeking respite in the ice-water pitcher, yet did his inane utterance glister, as it were, with the greasy high-mindedness and the tin-plated good-fellowship which no public speaker can very well avoid. In most cases this did not matter, because the majority of us who write badly enough to be in demand as lecturers are charlatans or bunglers at all seasons: but to observe bedizened in any such humbug the man of real talent is painful.

It is painful because there drift about in that more rarefied air of the platform some fumes, some straying gases, which affect the intelligence. A few victims these effluvia reduce to gulping, to the conscientious coughing of Camille, or to blank merciful unintelligibility: but the more hapless they intoxicate *coram populo.* And as a pragmatic people, we have learned to accept this fact. We do not note, as a rule, how wildly does the babblement made upon platforms by the habitués of this dire eminence differ from the at least relatively sane speech of our school-teachers and our politicians and our clergy in their private life. It is tacitly understood by everybody that, when "speaking", the professional "speaker" expects his sentiments to be received at a liberal discount, and upon this full dress occasion will introduce no one of his beliefs in their working clothes.

All oratory I, in brief, (with the appropriate glibness of a person who knows nothing whatever about it) take to be an art with its own formal conventions. I am at any event certain it is an art through which none may attain to self-expression; and in this respect it differs by a world's width from authorship.

I mean that the writer, at his desk, so long as he toils over the progress of composition, can imagine that somewhere outside the door of his study an intelligent and sympathetic audience, well worth all painstaking, awaits his masterpiece. To that "acute but honorable minority" he can address himself freely, with glad confidence, and without compromise.

Let no such happy man turn lecturer! I entreat, with an emotion, you may note, which rises

(*Continued on Page 4, Col. 1*)

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A LECTURE FOR DOROTHY

(*Continued from Page 3, Col. 5*)

naturally into blank verse. For when once this misled visionary mounts the platform, he becomes conscious that no supermen assemble to honor him. His flesh and blood audience is not even, in any real sense, sympathetic: at best it stays receptive, waiting to be wooed, waiting to be roused into approval of him, by its own standards. He perceives, too, that this audience (in common with any audience ever assembled anywhere) is not, or at least is not preeminently, intelligent. As a whole it very much prefers, it demands, and it awaits, those sleek false formulæ which the wise honor with lip service in public. So the entrapped word-monger begins with his "Ladies and gentlemen," and after loosing this trial balloon of fancy he is soon well under way in imaginative truckling.

I have been privileged at odd times to sit, serene and dutiless, upon the rostrum whence some less lucky author was presently to address his public; and I have considered his raw material. Not ever did the spectacle prove exhilarating: never did I covet his job. To be applauded by such people seemed to me, in all honesty, compromising. Sloth, and ostentation, and a timid lechery, and lightheadedness, and self-conceit, and disapproval, and inattention, and boredom, I found over plainly inscribed on the raised faces turned usward. And in yet more liberal quantities, of course, was to be seen gaping at us that dull-mindedness which continues to betray an uncoerced people into paying for, and even into using, tickets for a lecture.

III

Now I daresay, my dear Dorothy, that these are the prevailing traits in any human assemblage of the better sort when one views it without prejudice. I admit that, by and large, it is to just this partially cultured audience every American artist must appeal. But my point is that the American author who is seduced into lecturing cannot any more evade this discouraging fact: night after night he faces directly his potential admirers, in the persons of you and of the other flibbertigibbet students and of the depressed faculty and of their frowsy friends. He regards perforce this squatted herd of Mammalia at close range. No further delusion is possible. He sees immediately before him his paymasters, in the sensual, the indifferent, the chuckleheaded, and the smug middle-classes of an imperfectly civilized nation, upon whose favor and whose shifty whims he and his famousness and all our national art are dependent, at the last pinch.

The point is, furthermore, that no intelligent person in such circumstances will elect to speak with intelligence. Instead, "subdued", as the phrase runs, "to what he works in", he will cannily assume the thin virtues, the high-minded illogic, and the false good-humor which all better-thought-of Americans admire; he will prattle; and he will thus earn his lecture fee honestly, by purveying the sane and edifying entertainment he promised.

But the more wise, the more cautious writer, remains snug in his study, at play with his words, and happily imagining that he addresses an allworthy audience. That audience is in some sense the masterwork of every writer's invention. That audience does not exist anywhere in flesh, and at bottom he knows this. But in his bemused fancy that audience exists clearly enough throughout the while that he writes, and for that while it contents him.

THE IGNORAMUS AS NOVEL READER

(*Continued from Page 1, Col. 2*)

loudly as every one else. It must not be imagined, however, that yearning is exclusively a Continental habit, for certainly, in my opinion, American novelists carry off the prize for depreciatory advertisement of their own land; they introduce a quite new yearning element—the yearning for Culture—surely the dullest yearning of all.

II

During my fairly frequent visits to the United States, I always think that Americans lead rather exciting lives—a little more exciting—(though, as an Englishwoman, I think a little less interesting) —than the average Western European. But then somebody gives me The American Novel to read, and it gives the lie to all I know of America. American novelists, so far as I can see, always tell their own story; they all lead exactly the same life. Of course I may be unlucky in the novels I have read —or possibly I keep on reading the same novel again and again by mistake, but, rightly or wrongly, I am convinced that I have followed fifty times the following narrative—or something very like it:

American novelists are always born on a prairie, of a tyrannical farmer father and a worn-out domestic mother (or vice versa). From the very start they are far, far too cultured for their surroundings. As a rule they love their mother or father to excess—never both. Their hearts seethe more and more with repressed culture, and they yearn continually to go to college in some prairie centre and live among cultured persons and learn to read Homer, Havelock Ellis, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell and Freud. At last college is achieved, usually with the help of maternal self-sacrifice connected with the secret sale of eggs, but unfortunately culture is found to be lacking, even in college. Our multiple hero's character is moulded, (*a*) by a sympathetic assistant instructor who knows all about Karl Marx, can quote Kipling and T. S. Eliot in one breath and is presently fired for teaching subversive principles; (*b*) by the fact that a Fraternity called after a section of the Greek alphabet snobbishly refuses him on account of his poverty; and (*c*) by a Passionate Experience with some prairie vamp of oddly undelirious charm.

Our hero—but I must refer to him in the plural, since his name is legion—our heroes usually marry the vamp who immediately throws off her vampish disguise and becomes a sloven at home and a social climber abroad. Suffering is thus added to the influences that mould the character of our heroes. A baby is born, which is always adored by its father and neglected by its mother. Sometimes it is kept up late drinking cocktails; sometimes it is left alone in the house and falls into the fire or dies of typhoid; more often it simply cries itself to sleep. The family is whisked off by the fiendishly ambitious wife to Chicago, New York, or even Europe, and there the heroes are obliged to attend parties of uncultured persons to satisfy the wife's social aspirations. Very frequently the wife is so mad with ambition that she finally manages to nobble an English baronet—or even, in extreme cases, an Earl—as guest at one of her soirées. The cultural level, however, remains as low as before. (American novelists have at last discovered that English baronets do not say "Bloody" or "Strike Me Pink," but baronets are believed to be poor fish, all the same,—probably rightly.) The wife lives beyond her income, although the heroes—suffering like anything, of course, all the time—are kept hard at it earning their living by selling something very uninspiring. At night the poor fellows try to write a Great Novel, but the constant soirées interrupt their work.

If a visit to Europe is achieved, the same thing always happens. The suffering heroes pursue culture in and out of cathedrals, ruined abbeys, the studios of expatriated Americans, Communist meetings, museums, etc.,—but the wife Will Not Understand. At last the tide turns. The wife runs away with a Continental nobleman—usually the baby is seriously ill at the time—, and our heroes are free to return to New York or Chicago and Begin Again. Immediately they re-discover a dear little girl whom they used to know back home on the prairie—a sinless schoolmarm, probably, who has loved them all along. She is not cultured but cooks well and has a mother heart. (A cultured wife would be almost as tiresome as a vamp to the true American hero; all he wants is the humble love of a dear little girl, and no baronets or millionaires about the place.) In the sympathetic atmosphere of a dear little home, the Great Book gets finished. It won't sell at all, one can see that—the heroes are so uncompromisingly cultured—, but that doesn't matter; the dear little girl actually prefers being poor. And there is no doubt that the book is very Great. There the novel stops, because that is as far as the heroes have got with their own life.

On the whole it is perhaps more fun—(though more expensive)—to travel in person than to travel in print. It may be that the common tourist misses the essential yearning spirit of that region called Abroad—but at least he gets the illusion of variety, and that illusion alone is worth the extra money.

SERVANTS OF GOD

No. 12

(Their Holy House)

From the New York Tribune:

Examples of racial discrimination may be traced to the Church itself, the Rev. Dr. Allen Knight Chalmers, pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle Congregational Church, at Fifty-sixth Street, said in his sermon yesterday.

"Recently I visited a church where the Fiske University singers were appearing," he continued. "The church was located in an apartment hotel owned by the church and from which it derived its economic life. There were plenty of empty rooms in the hotel but at the conclusion of the service the sixty young students were not allowed to register there but were forced out into the sleet and snow to seek lodging elsewhere."

THE NEW DEAL?

by JAY FRANKLIN

NATIONAL politics are in the melting pot. Roosevelt's election implemented the old Jacksonian alliance of the South and West against East and North. As the implications of this alliance come to light in national policy, there will be loud yells followed by hasty counter-attacks. At present, the remnant of the Republican Party is paralyzed by the struggle for future control. Poor old Hoover thinks he can be re-elected in 1936. Somebody told him that Cleveland was re-elected after being once defeated. Ogden Mills is encouraging Hoover in the Cleveland complex. On the other hand, the "liberal wing," headed by Representative Wadsworth and Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, hopes to attract younger men into the party. The Old Guard —the Moses, Smoots and Watsons—still hold the party machinery and aren't displeased that the election went the way it did, if it succeeded in weakening Hoover's hold on the party. The Western or "progressive" Republicans, that remarkable group of elderly and loquacious Senators from the cow states, have virtually seceded from the party and are in loose alliance with the Democrats.

The Democrats are making desperate efforts to hold and increase the independent, liberal, and progressive following which holds the balance of power between the parties. Roosevelt is committed to a policy of following liberal principles. On the other hand, if the Solid South should discover that liberalism is not designed solely for export to the North and West, and should detect it below the Mason-Dixon line, where every striker is regarded as a Communist, the South would secede from the Democratic party. The Socialist and Communist party votes, and the radical parties generally, are on the decline. They went Democratic in 1932. Roosevelt cannot hold them in line, if he defers to the South; if he follows a radical policy, he may lose the South. Both of the major parties are, therefore, split, and the future of partisan action is prejudiced by deep and irreconcilable feuds.

These feuds will be intensified by the growth of native American radicalism, that is to say, by the growth of willingness to meet practical individual problems by new and unorthodox means. It is the greatest single phenomenon of our day. In the past four years, the United States has become socialistic in psychology, while vigorously repudiating Socialism. We are becoming communistic in practise, while violently repressing Communism. The revolt of the farm belt and the impatience of the intellectuals and the younger men with the old ways, the old ideas and the old fools who have made an economic shambles of the richest nation in the world, will make the next four years exciting, to say the least.

Organized labor is getting ready to make urgent demands. At the beginning of the depression, a prominent labor leader remarked in private conversation, "During the depression, organized labor will be too frightened and demoralized to do anything. As soon as the depression shows signs of passing, organized labor will raise hell!" With state Socialism already in force through the Farm Board, the R.F.C. and the other Hooverian institutions, Hoover's Committee on Recent Social Trends still urged that we adopt governmental and economic planning. Not so long ago, while President, Hoover at Indianapolis described "planning" as a sort of "infection" from the Russian Five-Year Plan, and denounced it. We *are* changing.

Younger groups throughout the country are in a ferment. The League for Independent Political Action, the New National Party group, the Militant Liberalism movement, are all symptoms of the search for a practical policy. The Douglas Credit Scheme is still being discussed. The late lamented Technocracy was greeted with such a wave of hope and fear that the principle of economic and functional research involved in it was forgotten, as the word went out to pan the Technocrats among the little brothers of the rich. Nevertheless, it was taken with seriousness, especially among the conservatives, as a new and hopeful approach to the old problem of economic stability and individual security. And finally, radicalism has been given great impetus by the almost incurable stubbornness and stupidity of our business and political stuffed shirts. Unless all of the laws of politics and of human behavior are false, President Roosevelt will have to ride or resist a rising wave of radical thought and unrest among the younger men.

The muddle and mess of our foreign relations is a monument to this theory. Messrs. Hughes, Kellogg and Stimson have succeeded in undermining our power, dissipating our influence and discrediting our policies in every corner of the globe. (And they were the best lawyers in the country.) Their disarmament policy has broken down in Europe and has succeeded only in weakening the power of the American navy to support our policy in the Pacific and Far East. Their Far Eastern policy has succeeded only in goading Japan, which is now in the control of young men, into further conquests and invasions in China, while their policy of refusing to deal with Russia has robbed us of the support of the only nation which has aims and interests similar to our own in the Far East. Their Kellogg Peace Pact has pushed us into a position of moral disapproval of Japan, without enlisting significant support in Europe. Their debt policy has succeeded in alienating from us all of our former associates in the war against Germany. If we should find ourselves engaged in hostilities with Japan over Manchuria (in which we have few important interests), with an inadequate navy and without Allies, the blood of innocent people will rest on the heads of Messrs. Hughes, Kellogg and Stimson and on the memories of Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. As it is, many Chinese have died during the past two years because the statesmen in charge of our foreign policies lacked the intelligence to realize that ponderous moral pretensions, unless backed by the power to secure compliance with our views, are irresponsible and dangerously short-sighted. Our cynical abandonment of the Philippines is a symptom both of the decline of American power engendered by twelve years of old men's political rule and of the decay of patriotism engendered by an equal period of old men's greedy control of business life.

We enter the Summer of 1933 blissfully unaware of the fact that the real struggle between the pre-war and post-war men and ideas is just beginning. The old men still have the power, the young men have only time on their sides. The New Deal promises to be a race between catastrophe and the death rate.

EIMI, EIMI, MEIMI, MO

by BEN HECHT

WELL, Tovarischi, we've been done in. Gospodin E. Cummings E. has just emerged from Russia, unholy land, all doubled up and yelling "Foul!" He no like.

In an enormous four-pound book yclept "Eimi" (for our Gospodin is a bit of a Greek scholar) E. Cummings E. has at those goddam Russian Soviets like an infuriated parakeet. Of all the dithering, fussy Maiden Aunts who ever yipped at the heels of Station Agents and Visa Officials, of all the package-dropping, umbrella-toting, yammering and persnickity glass-buttocked and fretful Yankees who ever went exploring, our Gospodin, E. Cummings E., cops the ivory toilet set.

As a commentator, observer, reporter on what's going on in the Soviets, Cummings is, let me assure you, Comrades, deaf, dumb and blind. Bedevilled by bum beer, dreadful odors and the wrong kind of mattresses, our Gospodin on arriving in the Muscovite Utopia went into a temper, stamped his foot, crossed his eyes and started keening for the defunct aristocracy. "Eimi" is the gasp by gasp account of a sort of three month fit thrown by a tourist who, howl though he would, failed to get the proper service.

And what a fit! Our Gospodin staggered in and out of Moscow speakeasies denouncing waiters, bus boys and the egg sandwiches; he fell off tram cars, cursing conductors (nobody could understand him or he might have picked up many a poke in the nose); he was swindled by guides, hotel clerks and even flower venders; he went around with a clothespin on his nose (for he can't stand smells, O, Fair Harvard). He scratched his fanny, screamed at bed-bugs, hollered his brains out when he got short-changed, kicked up his heels at literary teas, swilled beer like a he-man and tossed off vulgarities to the left and to the right but never, O, never (being a married man, as he tells the reader) laid a finger on a wench, though this doesn't prevent our Gospodin from giving out the news that the sovietized Tootsies are pretty lame pickings in the hay—a pal told him.

He took in all the shows, squawking at the price of tickets, at the bum plots, no good acting and the prevalence of halitosis. In short, he fluttered through Moscow and Odessa, a young Coolidge on a bender, and came out wrapped in the Stars and Stripes, ready to turn State's Evidence and with a two-hundred-and-twenty-five-thousand word announcement that E. Cummings E. is one hell of a sensitive plant.

But though no inner or outer picture of Russia results (beyond a vague sense that the Gospodin hurtled through Timbuctoo in a wheelbarrow), "Eimi" is the most compiete full-length combination portrait, inside and out, of a Parlor Pink put to the fire, of an American tourist (hay fever and all) embattled in heathenish foreign ports, of the Art conquers All æsthete (U. S. A. hatched) that has come skipping down the pike in a score of moons.

So, Comrades, what do we find in this latest of the Lenin hamstringers? What, as we say in our meetings, is the psychology of this Bourgeois? Comrades, the psychology of this Bourgeois is that underneath the eclectic literary hocus-pocus of which this Bourgeois has for some years been a persistent practitioner, is the mentality of a Harvard adolescent. It is a discovery difficult to make, since the Gospodin chooses to write in a very fancy style full of feather-stitchings, battenberg-work, misplaced punctuations, etc., etc., all of which must have driven the Covici-Friede printers nuts. But unfortunately the Gospodin has one fine gift. He is one of the best dialogue writers, one of the most succinct, malicious and high-handed quoting experts in these parts. As a result, an insight into his meditations, a bit confused in his more ambitious passages, becomes possible.

And with this insight we find that E. Cummings E. is basic type No. 1 of the U. S. A. æsthete —the pedant gone-a-wenching with lingo; the subprofessor reddening his nose in the hope of being mistaken for one of the boys. We find a vocabulary full of obsolete slang, attempts at airy man-in-the-street locutions of the sort that usually characterize the Realisms of the Studio tough boys. What a hail fellow this is, what a human eyes-a-twinkle laddie we have here, full of proletarian esprit and wise to the doings and sayings of the Male rampant—until somebody rubs his nose in the way the world is run. Whereupon, one whiff of a good honest healthy Russian (a wee bit high) and he is off in a cloud of New England horror. He retches, pales, stutters, pies all the type, and goes staggering down a Moscow street, undone.

The human nobility, the economic dream behind the little mishaps our Gospodin encountered in the land of the Soviets, have no meaning for him. He sneers voluminously and with considerable native talent at the tomb of Lenin. He can see in the whole Russian experiment only a dastardly effort to short-change him and interfere with his creature comforts and rare Nordic sensibilities. But enough of that.

"Eimi" is a tome of some importance, not only as a graphic, diverting, almost Mark Twainish account of a New England Bo-Peep among the wolves, but as an indication of a new style in American radicalism. It looks as if our local *Schöngeister* are doffing their Cossack hats. Bohemia, long the pale champion of revolt, is turning thumbs down on the travail of the underdog. As a result of "Eimi" there will ensue, Comrades, a wave of æsthetic yipping at the Stalin heels because Art is more important than Industry and because Artists are superior to Policemen. Sez who?

E. Cummings E.'s opus, inevitably enough, has been given courteous and oh such pleasant cheering in the press, particularly that conservative press which once frothed at its book reviewer's mouth whenever our Gospodin waltzed into vision with his sputterings. But now this erstwhile pariah has been taken to the bruised but still starched bosoms of the Democracy. The subscribers are assured that E. Cummings E.'s peculiar manner of writing is as easy as pie to decipher, that a deciphering will be rewarded by some fine literary nuggets, and that every red-blooded American should really do his best to wade through the thing. Goombye Gospodin!

But in closing, thanks old chap, for the Odessa Mentor.

The Editors, with tears in their eyes, note the epiphany of Château Mouquin, 1933.

The Gold Standard: The pot without the rainbow.

Internationalism: Mother-in-law's Day.

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(*Continued from Page 3, Col. 2*)

husband to move a bench over from the other side of the room so that she could rest. The top had a heavy layer of dust, she observed, and there wasn't a newspaper in the room.

Feeling around in her muff, Effie came across the lyrics of the minstrel and sighed as she decided it was their lustre which must defend her from the soot. So, sparingly and carefully, she placed the sheets on the bench and sat herself within their confines. Thus, they remained undisturbed for an hour. Schuyler borrowed Effie's fur-piece and moved away from the fire but she lingered, deep in thought, until the army of officials arrived.

When her husband had been taken into the next room with the male examiners, she was left alone with two amazons. Rising, she noticed with regret that the lyrics were well-nigh indistinguishable and so threw them into the fire. This action aroused the suspicions of one of the matrons, who whispered to her companion and hurried from the room.

The remaining matron performed the customary examination and then ordered Effie to stand with her face to the wall. After a second the matron let out a shriek and Effie remembered three other women running into the room with a tripod which was lowered a trifle. There was a hurried conference among the quartet, followed by a flash and a click. Effie wondered why she should be photographed in such a unique position and felt nauseated at a second flash when she felt smoke creeping up her back. At a third explosion Effie's legs felt as if she were being burned and she fainted away, upsetting the tripod.

II

When she awoke, Effie found herself in bed in a small room. A sheet was pinned around her and on the corner of the feather cover she saw the name of the *Hotel Central*. She rang, and the principal matron from the station stepped in. She tried to speak but the amazon guardian pushed a formal-looking paper into her hands. In large, unsteady letters, the message was written in English:

"Until Berlin further activities to announce care shall, you as a personage of suspect here held are while curious and highly interesting hieroglyphics on your person found were. Photographs of the unidentified area to Berlin sent been have and your mann is here at the hotel. His excellency the American consul from Dantzig today coming is but until the mysterious code found on you determined is, you at the Hotel Central held be shall where full pension by you, under the demands of the Berlin secret police who in a few hours arriving are, paid be will." The signature was beyond Effie and, when left alone, she went back to sleep.

She was next awakened by a number of officials standing around her room and passing copies of a newspaper from one to another. Finally they passed one to her and she emitted a faint scream as she recognized the scrawl of the minstrel. The picture was not bad, she thought, and for a first view she was rather proud of her pet birthmark.

On his first case since arriving in Europe, the young vice-consul from Dantzig was the next to appear. He had been in touch with Moscow already and had been able to identify the Hemingways, but all identification was to no avail as the photostatic copies of the mysterious lyrics had caused a mild sensation at the Wilhelmstrasse.

Intrigues of the most far-reaching influence were read into the couplets, especially as they were in four languages. Copies were sent to all the principal offices of the Secret Service, and the Emperor, in ordering a special investigation, commanded all code specialists to deduce every possible shred of physical importance from the pictures.

Effie explained everything, including the beauty mark, to the blushing vice-consul who, in his university German, struggled to convey the matter above the waist to the intelligence of the small town authorities. But, again, to no avail. Finally, he managed to sneak in several flasks of hot water to Effie which she applied to the disputed territory, thus removing any further opportunity for amateur photographers who were related to the officials to search for sensationally provocative material.

Then the vice-consul appealed to Washington and sharp inquisitive cables were sent to Berlin in the name of Democracy. Effie even planned to notify her section of the American Women's Clubs who were short of issues to protest at the time. But before return cables were necessary, the real spies were located in Breslau and the Wilhelmstrasse turned to other matters of amusement than the blurred couplets of Frau Hemingway.

Effie offered to pay any sum for the return of the original plates but a certain Herr Jessner, who was organizing a Nacktkultur Club, bid for the property and placed them in his collection. And it was only last Fall when a new Mata Hari was discovered in Latvia that the Hemingway records were brought to light again. The Hitlerites showed great interest in the case as a valuable piece of Imperialist stupidity, but Herr Jessner refused to allow his negatives to be reproduced, maintaining that it might influence the Nazi nudists.

REQUIRED READING

"The American Review." No. 1. April 1933

Required reading: The New Age, 1907-1914; *The New Witness,* 1910-1914; *The Dublin Review,* 1911-1914; *La Revue Universelle,* 1911-1914; *The Egoist,* 1913-1914; *The Nation,* 1909-1914; *The Independent,* 1901-1903; *Illustrated London News,* 1907-1914; Hilaire Belloc, "The Party System," London, 1911; G. K. Chesterton, "What's Wrong With the World," London, 1910.

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